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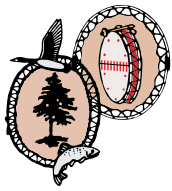
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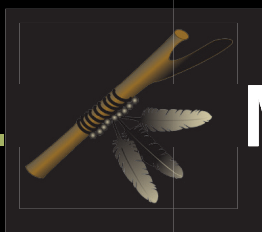
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Singer at N'we Jinan Festival
Photo by
Catherine Orr



There's a lot of talk about the proposed Cree constitution. Many are asking worried questions about what it means and what will it do for the Cree Nation.

Straight off, it's important for me to say that I support the adoption of a constitution for the Cree of Eeyou Istchee. The reason for this is simple. It is another step in taking control of our future as a People and a Nation. It is making choices about our lives that do not have to be approved or accept-

right to self-determination and because of that they should determine their political status and be able to follow their own path to economic, social and cultural development.

No longer would Cree First Nations have to send in financial reports to the governments or have them appoint an auditor. However, we will have to ensure that band members see the reports within 180 days of the end of the fiscal year. No longer would outside governments have a say in what

leases). It will have the force of law and Canadian constitutional protection.

This constitution means that the Cree will no longer be wards of the state. It's about time. No longer will we be treated as "Indian" children to be protected and told what to do. That means a lot. It also means that we have to take on the responsibilities, obligations and rights of an adult in the world around us. You can study the proposed Cree constitution at your local band office.

Yes, this is a challenge, but not unlike the challenge the Cree faced back in the 1970s when the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement was negotiated and signed. This step is not the only one we will take in determining the future of the Cree as a People and a Nation, but it is one we should all take part in.

It's about time. No longer will we be treated as "Indian" children to be protected and told what to do.

ed by either the federal or provincial government.

Crees have stated over and over that we have never given up our inherent right to self-government and self-determination. The Cree constitution is a step in that direction. While it might not be as all-encompassing of the Eeyou traditional territory as I would wish, it is a start. A start that many other First Nations would wish to have. It certainly brings home the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, which states Indigenous peoples have the

by-laws are acceptable in the communities. In fact, we will have the power to pass laws that reflect the Cree way-of-life.

The constitution will not be written in stone and can be changed to reflect new conditions. Any amendments will be determined only by the Cree Nation as a whole and will not involve Canada or Quebec. It does not affect Cree governance on Category II or III lands and only applies to Category IA lands (and Category III enclaves such as Hudson Bay and other church

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the Nation is published every two weeks by Beesum Communications. **EDITORIAL BOARD** L. Stewart, W. Nicholls, M. Siberok, Mr. N. Diamond, E. Webb. **EDITOR IN CHIEF** Will Nicholls. **DIRECTOR OF FINANCES** Linda Ludwick. **EDITORS** Lyle Stewart, Martin Siberok. **PRODUCTION AND SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR** Joshua Grant. **CONTRIBUTING WRITERS** X. Kataquapit, S. Orr, D. Isaac, J. Grant, A. German, D. Coyle. **DESIGN** Matthew Dessner. **SALES AND ADVERTISING** Danielle Valade, Wendall Gull. **THANKS TO:** Air Creebec.

CONTACT US: The Nation, 4529 CLARK, #403, Montreal, QC, H2T 2T3. **EDITORIAL & ADS:** Tel.: 514-272-3077, Fax: 514-278-9914. **HEAD OFFICE:** P.O. Box 151, Chisasibi, QC. J0M 1E0. **www.nationnews.ca**. **EDITORIAL:** nation@nationnews.ca. **news@nationnews.ca**. **ADS:** Danielle Valade: ads@nationnews.ca. Wendall Gull: wendall@nationnews.ca. Mike Ryan: sales@nationnews.ca. **SUBSCRIPTIONS:** \$60 plus taxes, US: \$90, Abroad: \$110. Payable to beesum communications, all rights reserved, publication mail #40015005, issn #1206-2642. **The Nation is a member of:** The James Bay Cree Communications Society, Circle Of Aboriginal Controlled Publishers, Magazines Canada Quebec Community Newspaper Assn. Canadian Newspapers Assn. Les Hebdomadaires Du Québec.



“There's more space in the exhibit area, more space in the cell rooms, improved technology, a new garage and a better environment overall.”



Better Equiped

by Joshua Grant



New police station in Mistissini up and running

The Eeyou Eenou Police Force (EPPF) opened a new and improved station in Mistissini February 23 with a ribbon-cutting and flag-raising ceremony followed by a lunch for community members. The new detachment will provide better services for both the community and the region, said Inland District Captain Joe Saganash. The Inland District encompasses Waswanipi, Ouje-Bougoumou and Mistissini.

“It's much better than the other police station we had,” Saganash told *the Nation*. “There's much more space and it's going to be better for our officers. There's more space in the exhibit area, more space in the cell rooms, improved technology, a new garage and a better environment overall.”

The EPPF is considering adding an impound yard at the station, he noted. “Instead of going all the way to Chibougamau we're hoping to be able to store [impounded vehicles] here in Mistissini.”

Several higher ups from both the EPPF and the Sûreté du Québec (SQ) attended the inauguration, including EPPF Director Reggie Bobbish, Inspector Lyle Cox as well as Commandant Louis Castonguay and Lieutenant Martin Denis of the SQ. Mistissini Police Commissioner George Gunner and Deputy Chief Gerald Longchapel were also in attendance.

“The ceremony started just before 1 pm with an opening prayer,” said Saganash. “Officer Robie Petawabano was our emcee and our youngest offi-

cer, Jeremiah Blacksmith, marched with officers Dale Petawabano and Rocky Neeposh for the raising of the flags.”

“There was a lunch afterwards where everyone was welcome to come and visit the new detachment. Oh and we served cake,” he added with a laugh.

The new building is located at 303 Main Street and boasts six holding cells and wholesale improvements on the old detachment. Saganash noted that their old space had just four cells and only one working washroom.

In the new detachment there are retrofitted offices, cutting-edge police technology for fingerprinting and witness interrogation, large garages with space for both police equipment and

seized vehicles, spacious evidence storage, staff washrooms, in-cell sinks and toilets, and an all-new plumbing and water filtration system for the entire facility.

A project two years in the making that was headed by the Cree Nation's Capital Works and Services Department, construction on the new detachment began in the summer of 2015. The Stavibel engineering group and MLS and Associés Architectes Inc. were the companies responsible for seeing it through to completion.

"Now, we're better equipped," said Saganash in conclusion

"There was a lunch afterwards where everyone was welcome to come and visit the new detachment. Oh and we served cake"



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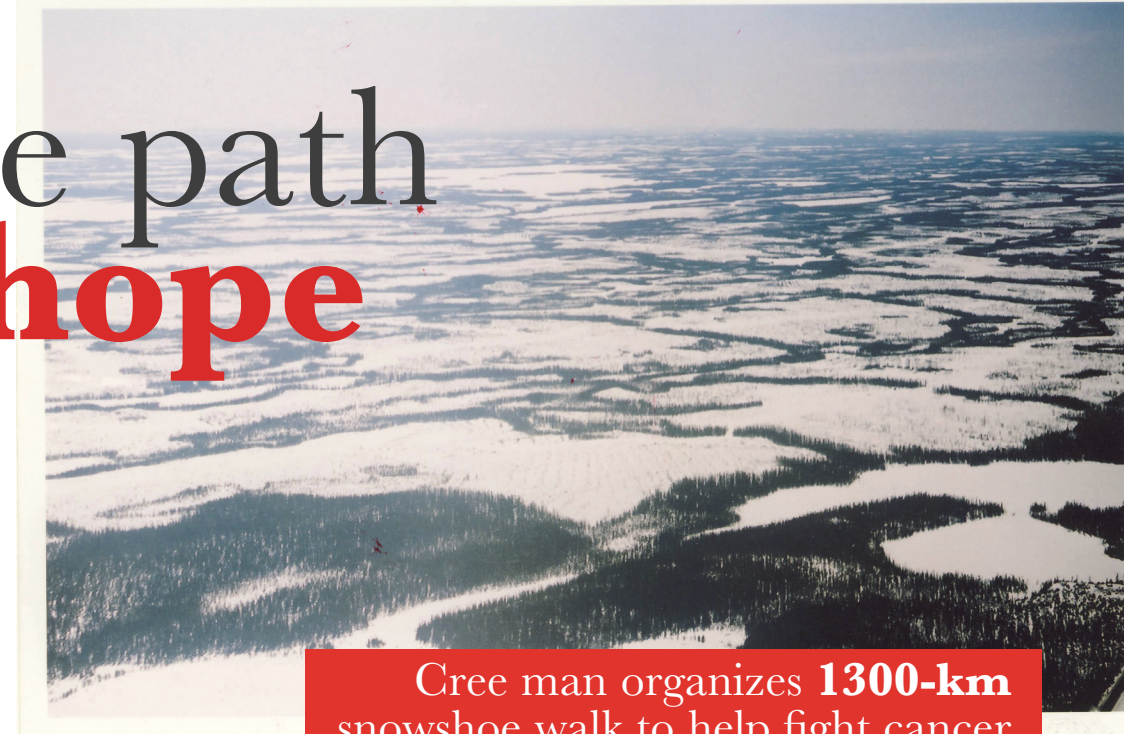
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The path of hope

by Dan Isaac



Cree man organizes 1300-km snowshoe walk to help fight cancer

"It's exhausting and your legs burn," said Tony Blackned, founder and leader of the Wahstauskun Winter Journey of Hope. "But words can't describe the feeling of being out there, knowing that your ancestors have walked this same path."

Blackned and his fellow walkers have braved frigid temperatures while snowshoeing from one Eeyou Istchee community to another in order to raise awareness and establish a support system for those battling cancer in the James Bay. And while cancer is an issue that has effected nearly every family in some way, for Blackned, it's a cause that hits even closer to home.

"My cousin passed away from stomach cancer, and I promised him I would do this journey for him," Blackned said while choking back tears. "But I recently got medevac'd to Montreal in October and right now I'm awaiting test results. My doctor told me it might be cancer around my stomach and a tumor behind my left eye. That's when I decided to step up and get the word out about this journey."

The walk began February 7 in Kuujuaapik, Nunavik, and will end in

Ottawa – an estimated 1300-kilometre trek.

"We started with 11 of us," said Blackned. "Right now we have 26. We've added walkers from each of the Cree Communities we've reached."

Every walker on the journey walks for a family member who's been lost to or survived cancer. "There was a boy who got hired for a job in Mistissini, but his first priority was to join this journey," Blackned told *The Nation*. "Two of his uncles were just diagnosed with cancer."

Currently, the group has been traveling 25 to 50 km per day depending on weather conditions. But for all the walkers, the journey is about more than just distance.

"There's a lot of healing to be had out on the land. We've been having sharing circles around the fire at night to get to know everyone better," said Blackned. "But people are opening up about a lot with the group, and talking about things they've never shared with anyone before."

The snowshoeing has been taking place during weekdays, with the aim of reaching a new Cree community every

weekend. Once there, Blackned speaks to the community and media. But his main goal is to ensure his walkers have a warm place to rest.

"Every community has shown us so much support when we arrived," said Blackned. "I have to speak every time we reach a new community, but first I try to make sure my fellow walkers have as quiet a place as possible to get their rest."

Cancer survivors in each Cree community are also mobilizing. In several of the communities, survivors have coordinated the group to ensure the next community is ready for them, and every walker has a place to stay.

The funds raised from the walk go to David's Journey, a cancer awareness program that operates in the nine Cree communities.

"In every community, small businesses and youth councils and band councils have donated to our walk," Blackned said. "It's a great feeling when you're out there knowing that we've moved fast and that everyone is in good health. A lot of the walkers who joined have told me, 'We're gonna' go all the way with you.'"

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Teacher donates hair for hope

Jacqueline Quinn of Mistissini recently donated her locks to the CanDonate Hair Program of Quebec, an organization that gives human hair wigs to children in Quebec who lost their hair during cancer treatments. Quinn described the process she went through to ensure her donation was accepted and why she made the commitment.

"When I turned 35, I set personal goals for myself, one being to donate my hair. I researched and found an organization that caught my attention. My hair had to be all natural and a specific length so I knew I had to grow it out and slowly cut off the dye. This took a good two years.

"My hairdresser was very good to me and encouraged me along the way. We worked together slowly, cutting my hair and keeping it healthy for donation. My hair will be used to make a wig for either a child or an adult who is receiving cancer treatment and it will be given to them for free. I am able to attach a letter to my donation and this letter will be given to whoever receives the wig.

"I wanted to donate my hair simply because I am able to. I am donating to a good cause and am helping others. My little boys have watched me prepare for this donation and they had a few questions about it. The lesson I taught them in all of this was that it is good to give to others without receiving anything in return. It's just feeling good about what you've done for someone, knowing that it has touched a life."

To learn more about the CanDonate Hair Program, the only non-profit organization in Quebec authorized to accept hair donations, visit donespoircancer.ca or e-mail donespoir@gmail.com

Obedjiwan bans drug offenders

The Atikamekw community of Obedjiwan is putting its new regulations for drug dealers and those convicted of drug-related offenses into practice. Recently a suspected cocaine dealer from outside of Obedjiwan was forced to leave the community, and three band members who are currently facing drug charges will also be subject to a five-year banishment if found guilty.

Last November, community residents voted 81% in favour of a proposal to see drug dealers banned for five years. At the time, the community was in crisis due to rampant drug use and easy access to illegal substances. According to community members the new law has quickly made a difference.

Coon Come injured in accident

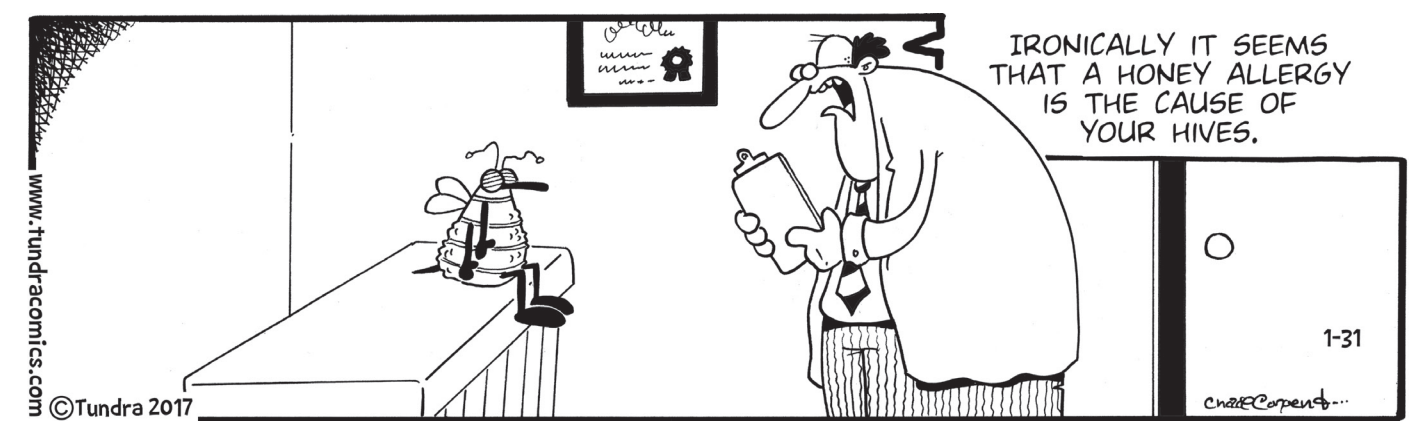
Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come was taken to the Mistissini clinic and transferred to the Chibougamau Hospital for further care March 1 after suffering one broken and two fractured ribs in a snowmobile accident while moose hunting on Mistissini territory.

A team of first responders, members of the Mistissini Fire Department and a doctor from the Mistissini clinic were flown to the site to assist Coon Come.

Coon Come told the Nation that his recovery is going well. For the first week he needed help getting out of bed and had to stand up in order to eat but now he is getting out of bed on his own and able eat while sitting at a table.

"Breathing is still a little difficult," he said, "I'm short of breath at times and am still taking medication to ease the pain."

"I appreciate all the ones who took the time to say a prayer for my recovery," he added. "And by the way, I did get some moose before the accident."



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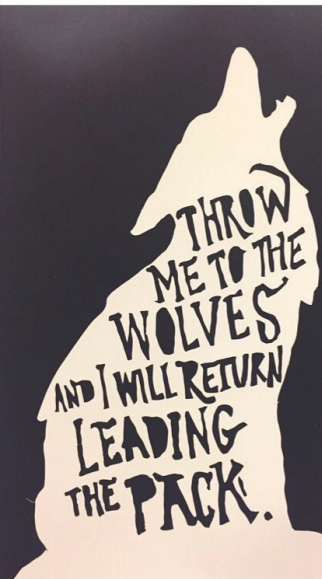
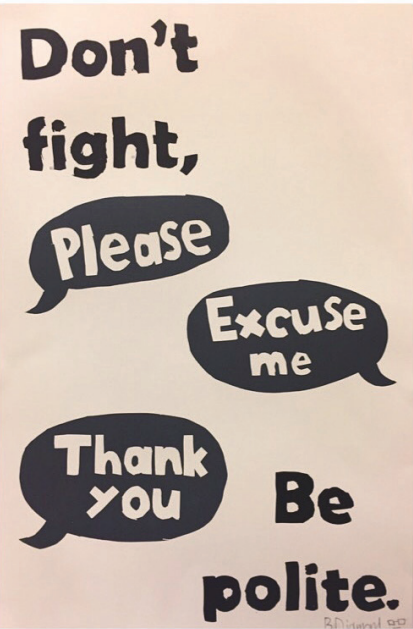
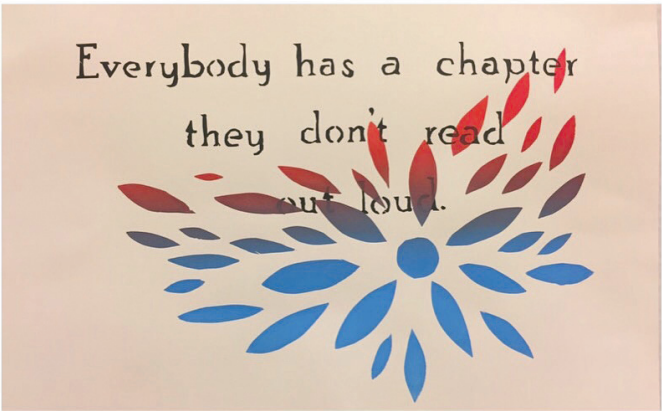
“We’re giving the students a reason to stay in school and take ownership of their education.”
- David Hodges, Program Coordinator

Mikw Chiyâm arts program celebrates its second year

by Dan Isaac
Photos by Catherine Orr,
or provided by Mikw Chiyâm

Active in the Arts

Left - Screen prints and mixed media projects created by students from Wiinibekuu and Voyageur Memorial schools as part of the **Mikw Chiyâm Arts Program**



to turn them into a career. I can't wait to see where they take it."

There are other ways in which the program has enriched the education experience of students. "When I started Mikw Chiyâm, I was acting out by not really applying myself to my school work," said Jarrett, a student enrolled in the program. "The program really motivated me to do better. I started asking my teachers for help when I needed it and became

one of the better students in my class."

Every program has to learn from its participants, and Mikw Chiyâm takes that statement to heart. "The program needs my input as much as I've needed it," said Jarrett in reference to the program's commitment to student-driven programming and improvement. "It's the greatest program I've participated in."

Another student, Tre Turner, echoed that sentiment. "We now have a couch in the classroom because of the students' demands," said Turner. "Last year some students left the program because it wasn't what they thought it would be. This year it's more lenient, the program adapted to what the students were saying. It's very inclusive."

Turner is one of the students who discovered talents he didn't know he



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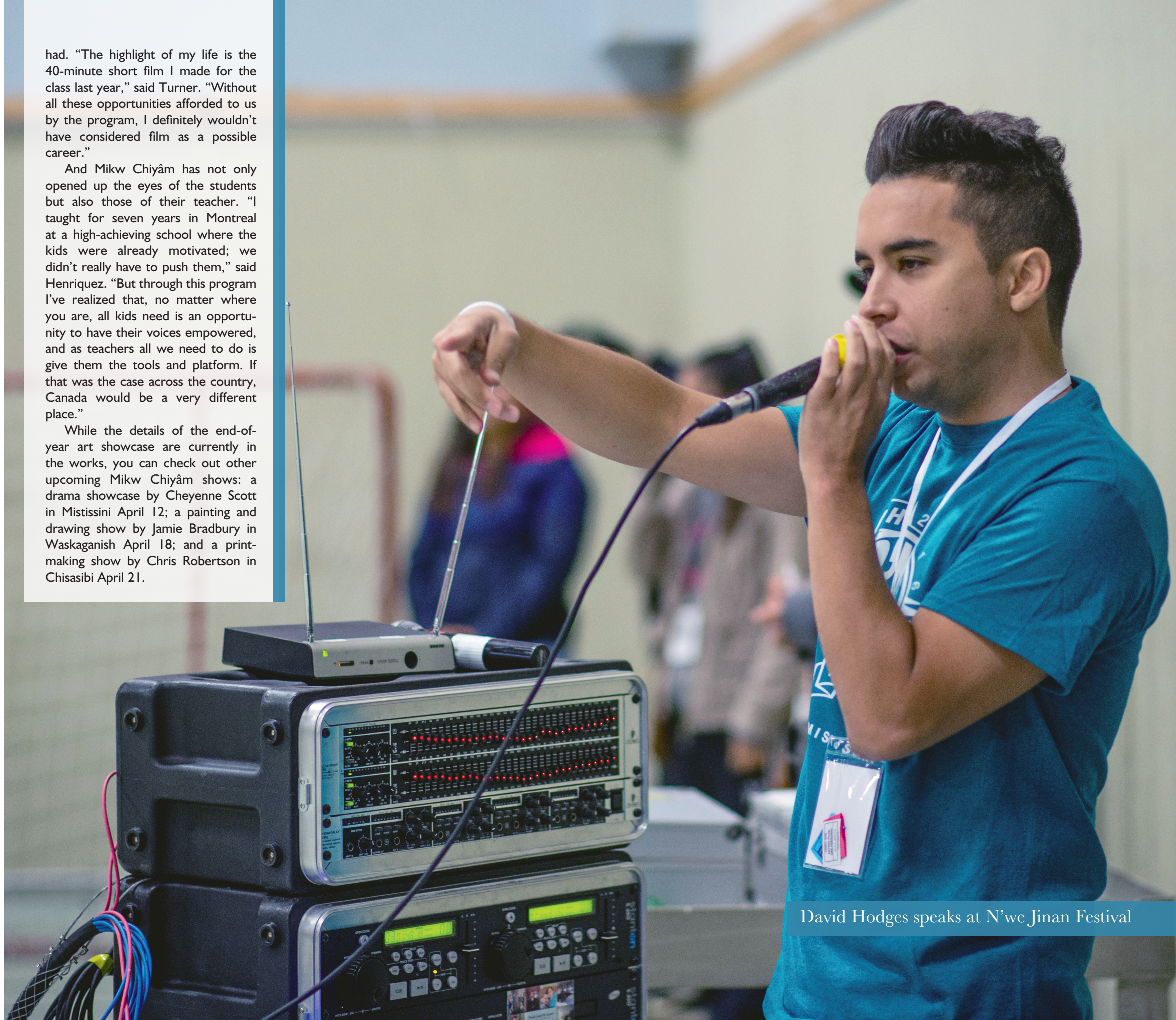
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had. "The highlight of my life is the 40-minute short film I made for the class last year," said Turner. "Without all these opportunities afforded to us by the program, I definitely wouldn't have considered film as a possible career."

And Mikw Chiyâm has not only opened up the eyes of the students but also those of their teacher. "I taught for seven years in Montreal at a high-achieving school where the kids were already motivated; we didn't really have to push them," said Henriquez. "But through this program I've realized that, no matter where you are, all kids need is an opportunity to have their voices empowered, and as teachers all we need to do is give them the tools and platform. If that was the case across the country, Canada would be a very different place."

While the details of the end-of-year art showcase are currently in the works, you can check out other upcoming Mikw Chiyâm shows: a drama showcase by Cheyenne Scott in Mississauga April 12; a painting and drawing show by Jamie Bradbury in Waskaganish April 18; and a print-making show by Chris Robertson in Chisasibi April 21.



David Hodges speaks at N'we Jinan Festival



Proves that **endurance**
is key to success in
cross-country
snowmobile racing



GUNNER REPEATS WIN AT FOLIFRETS

by Dan Coyle | Photos by Maxime Charron

Rain and warm temperatures brought an early end to winter sporting events across many parts of southern Quebec, but the conditions have been near perfect for a host of snowmobile races taking place across Eeyou Istchee.

One of the highlights of this year's snowmobile cross-country racing schedule occurred February 23 to March 4 when hundreds of enthusiasts from across Quebec and Eeyou Istchee converged on Chibougamau for the 51st edition of the Festival Folifrets Baie-James.

Founded in 1967, Festival Folifrets offers three categories of snowmobile cross-country races, including Vintage, Sport and Pro. As the name suggests, the highlight of the Vintage competition is the classic machines used by participants, while endurance is the key to success in Sport and Pro categories.

This year's Pro race measured 340 kilometres in length and was dominated by Cree racers, including Nigel Gunner of Mistissini, who claimed victory at the event for a second straight year.

Riding to victory on his Arctic Cat, Gunner was just one of six drivers to finish the Pro race, turning in a time of four hours, 35 minutes and 59 seconds – over six-and-a-half minutes ahead of runner-up François Paré.

The other four finishers all hail from Eeyou Istchee, including Mistissini's Brian Coonishish, who placed third with a time of 5:11:52, while Elijah Matoush followed

That proved to be a **sweet victory** for Gunner, who fell just two-and-a-half minutes short of the win in 2015, forcing him to settle for second place

at 5:34:39. Danny Gunner and George Blacksmith battled it out for fifth place, with Gunner reaching the finish line just three minutes ahead of Blacksmith. Seven of the remaining eight drivers were forced to abandon their machines during the race, while Shaun

Neeposh faced a bitter disappointment after being unable to start. It has been a successful couple of years for Nigel Gunner at the Festival Folifrets. Gunner claimed victory by the narrowest of margins at last year's event, topping out second-place fin-

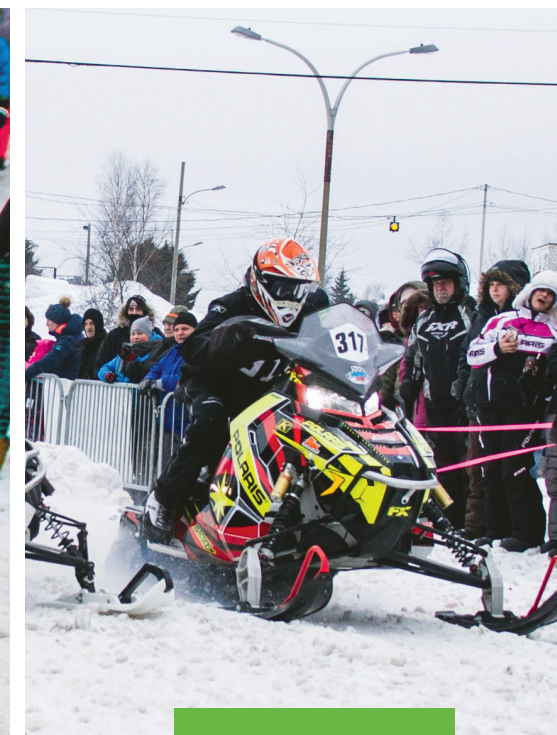
isher Benjamin Dufour by just 13 seconds, while turning in a time of 4:10:20. That proved to be a sweet victory for Gunner, who fell just two-and-a-half minutes short of the win in 2015, forcing him to settle for second place.

The Cree Nation was also well represented on the track in the Sport category, with Benoit Longchap powering to victory on the 160 km course in 2:20:28. However, it was far from an easy win for Longchap, who finished a mere 70 seconds ahead of Sebastien Neeposh,

while Joseph Coon claimed third place, just two minutes, 16 seconds back of the leader. Snowmobilers were also kept busy during the Mistissini Snowmobile Challenge on March 5, which featured races for every age group, from Beginners

to Pros. The ladies were also well represented in the Women's Cross Country event. Mistissini's Hilda Milanscum took the checkered flag in Women's Cross Country, leading a field of 18 competitors, including 14 finishers.

Dorianne Bosum of Ouje-Bougoumou earned second place, followed by Jana Sam of Chisasibi, while Eleanor Coonishish and Stacey-Ann Coonishish, both of Mistissini, rounded out the Top 5. Conrad Mianscum was denied a chance at the win



at Festival Folifrets when the snowmobile he was driving burst into flames, forcing him to withdraw from the Pro event. But Mianscum returned to action with a vengeance in Mistissini with the same ride, powering to victory in that Pro event, ahead of Robert Rupert, Dwayne Macleod,

Danny Gunner and Brandon Coon, while Nigel Gunner failed to finish. In Sport category action in Mistissini, 16 of 19 competitors completed the race, led by Jimmy Coonishish, who edged out Brandon Voyageur, while Alexander Swallow placed third.

The Festival Folifrets and Mistissini Snowmobile Challenge have dominated the snowmobile racing landscape in recent weeks, but were not the only events taking place in the month of March. Riders returned to the track on March 10-12 for the 4th annual Chisasibi

Snowmobile Challenge, where over \$40,000 in prize money was available to be won in races for men, women, boys and girls. According to Jonathan Matthews Neeposh, who has gained a steadily increasing following on his Facebook page, Cree Impact Neeposh Media, which cov-

ers snowmobiling and other sports events across Eeyou Istchee, the Men's Pro event at the Chisasibi Snowmobile Challenge which started just at press time guaranteed a gruelling two-day race. "This is not an ordinary race," said Neeposh in conversation with *the Nation*. "The Chisasibi race is a

tough event that makes the other races look short [in comparison]." Indeed, the two-day Pro race in Chisasibi is not for the faint of heart, or the novice snowmobile enthusiast. While the finishing touches were still being put on the course for this year's Chisasibi Snowmobile

Challenge, last year's race measured a whopping 1109 km. First-place prize money in the Men's Pro event is a healthy \$10,000, with the winner of the Men's Sport race pocketing a tidy \$4000. There is also plenty of incentive to win in the Women's Cross Country, with the

Last year's race measured a whopping **1109 km.**

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winning driver taking home a \$3000 top prize.

Boys aged 15 to 17 raced for a grand prize of \$1500, while Girls 15-17 competed for a \$1250 first prize.

Just one week after the Chisasibi Snowmobile Challenge, the scene shifts to Ouje-Bougoumou on March 18-19 for the Ouje-Bougoumou Ski-Doo Rally.

Young men 16 years of age and older can chase a \$4000 top prize in the Rally's 300 km Pro race, while the 150 km Sport event winner will receive a cheque for \$2000.

The Ouje-Bougoumou Ski-Doo Rally is a great event for young snowmobilers who are just getting comfortable with lengthy cross-country racing. A 75 km Beginners event for drivers 16 and over offers an attractive \$1000 top prize, while the Women's 75 km race will pay out \$1500 to the winner.

For more information, and live updates on all major snowmobile events in Eeyou Istchee, search Facebook for @cree-impactneeposhmedia and @NATIONnewsmagazine.



The Oujé-Bougamou Ski-Doo Rally is a great event for **young snowmobilers** who are just getting comfortable with lengthy cross-country racing.



Stornoway is pleased to announce the appointment of two new members to the team:
Ms. Minnie Coonishish and Mr. Charlie Awashish

As the Mecheshoo Agreement Implementation Officer, Minnie will represent Stornoway in the ongoing partnership with the Crees, as well as economic and social partners in the region. Minnie will also support Human Resources' recruitment of Cree workers. She brings to the team a wealth of experience, local knowledge, and exceptional enthusiasm.

Minnie will be based at Stornoway's Mistissini office.

Charlie Awashish has been promoted as Integration and Diversity Officer. In his new role, Charlie will monitor Training and Human Resources diversity and integration projects. He will ensure that inclusion strategies align with company responsibilities and provide guidance and support to all Stornoway employees to better develop their knowledge of Cree culture. Charlie brings with him more than 30 years of experience and has great respect for the Cree culture that he is very proud to share.

Charlie will carry out his new mandate from the Renard mine site.

We would like to welcome Minnie and Charlie to the Stornoway team. WE WISH THEM MUCH SUCCESS IN OUR COMPANY.



Minnie Coonishish: 1.581.991.1403

Charlie Awashish: 1-450-616-0088 ext. 6179

MOLD MAN

THE HOUSEHOLD - PART 2

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THROAT, SKIN OR EYE IRRITATIONS,
COUGHING OR WHEEZING.



I AM MOLD MAN!



THESE ARE THE PLACES I LIKE TO HANG OUT:
• THE BASEMENT
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• ON THE WALL OR FLOOR NEXT TO THE BATHTUB OR SHOWER
• AT THE BOTTOM EDGE OF WINDOWS
• CLOSETS

WHAT DO I DO IF I FIND MOLD?

- FOR AREAS SMALLER THAN ONE SQUARE METER (SIZE OF A LARGE GARBAGE BAG):
- WEAR AN ADEQUATE BREATHING MASK (N95), GOGGLES AND RUBBER GLOVES.
 - SCRUB AWAY WITH A MIXTURE OF 1/2 CUP BLEACH IN 1 QT. WATER AND A LITTLE DETERGENT, BUT A MOLD CLEANING AGENT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED.
 - CHILDREN, ELDERLY AND PEOPLE WITH ASTHMA, SHOULD NOT BE PRESENT WHILE CLEANING-UP SINCE MOLD CAN BECOME AIRBORNE.
- IF YOUR MOLD AREA IS BIGGER IN SIZE, OR IF THE MOLD KEEPS COMING BACK EVEN AFTER CLEANING - CONTACT YOUR LOCAL HOUSING DEPARTMENT.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Lawrence P. Katapatuk | Regional Housing Planner - CWS - CNG
T: (819) 856-5234 | housingplanner@cngov.ca

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Cree Nation Government
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“Game meats are very healthy for adults and children, and hunting is great exercise. **But it's important to take precautions** handling and butchering meat killed with lead ammunition”

Getting the lead out

Switching ammo can
make traditional
food **more healthy**

by Amy German
Photos by Brendan Forward

While it's no secret that fresh hunted meat is about the healthiest thing Crees can eat, lead shot can cause some rather serious health problems, according to the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay. Thankfully, there are new ammunition alternatives.

According to Dr. Elizabeth Robinson at the CBHSSJB, the Health Board started tracking the lead issue back in the 1990s, first checking if the elevated lead levels in the blood of Crees in certain communities was coming from water or soil.

“The levels we are seeing in Eeyou Istchee may contribute to high blood pressure in adults and can cause learning difficulties and behavioral problems in children,” said Robinson.

“In one coastal community, half of people aged 40 and over and one



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For game killed with lead shot,
give children and pregnant women parts
that are **far away from the pellets**

third of those aged 15 to 39 have levels above Health Canada's guidelines. We first became aware of a number of people with high lead levels in the 1990s in one community."

Eventually it was determined that lead shot was responsible for the elevated levels of lead in their blood samples.

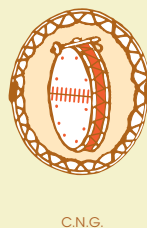
According to Robinson, between 2002-2009 the Health Board tested between 100 and 250 people in each Cree community to check for lead levels and it was confirmed that one community they had known about since the 1990s had the highest levels of lead, but that people were also being affected in other communities.

"The Cree Health Board has participated in several studies on blood lead levels of Eeyouch individuals living in Eeyou Istchee and has found elevated blood lead levels. The highest blood lead levels can be found in men who are hunters," explained Robinson.

Once it was determined that lead shot

was the culprit for the higher lead levels within the Cree population, the CBHSSJB took action to ensure that people didn't suddenly stop eating wild meat by informing them how to handle game killed with lead shot.

"It is safe to hunt and eat game that was killed using lead. Game meats are very healthy for



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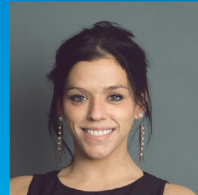
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Douglas Simpson



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Snowshoe tales

by Sonny Orr

My little moccasins crunched quietly in the snow, following the tracks my mother made ahead of me. I was pulling a tiny sled laden with a precious load of vaccines. Trudging along to the next house, we finally made it onto the porch through drifts that seemed mountainous to my five-year-old mind. The landscape was crispy clear and not many people were around as some sickness had spread quickly and made even the hardest souls long for some soothing chicken soup to heal everyone.

My mother, a registered nurse, cheerily readied the vaccinations and injected everyone in the household. I guess the serum worked because when some Elders mention that time to me, they hug and kiss me. Even though I'm in my late 50s, I still feel like a little boy when I get a gracious kiss from an elderly lady. It's 1964 and Fort George still had no idea that a decade later life would be so different from those days without electricity and running water.

A decade later, getting around the area still depended on dog teams, although the occasional snowmobile roared down the trails once dominated by the Husky and the long sled. Dogs were working machines that could be recycled into furred hoods of the parka. These dog furs were far superior to those of the wolf or fox as the long hairs fended off ice and other winter

hazards, like frostbite and burns from the intense northern cold. The other form of transportation was the snowshoe, invented in North America and still used today by thousands of people throughout the north.

Snowshoes were just extensions for the moccasin and often were custom-made for you by your grandparents. In my case, my grandfather and mother made my little snowshoes, which I enjoyed using until they were too small for my growing feet. Soon, as I grew rapidly into a young man of 12 years, my snowshoes became an essential part of my life. Although I considered myself fairly good at getting around, I was just an amateur compared to my uncle and his buddies, who grew up using snowshoes all their lives. Sometimes I would get snickered at when I bent down to tie my laces to my boots, which had replaced my hide-and-fur moccasins. My uncle would deftly insert his foot into the loop of moose-hide rope, do a little twisting and voilà, the snowshoe was magically ready to use in under three seconds. Meanwhile, I was still fumbling with the laces while my hands slowly froze and my fingers were rendered useless until they warmed up in my mittens. I was such an amateur that I would be left behind destined to follow the trail made by my uncle.

After a few years, my snowshoes had an accident when my axe chopped through a branch, through the tip of my snowshoes and nearly into my left leg. There was a lot of tsking and some grumbling about how clumsy I was and how I probably would freeze to death if left alone for more than a few hours in the bush. When I got home, I received much more than a reprimand, as I had to hang around and watch how to repair my snowshoes. No chance of getting another pair in under two or three weeks and I still had a lot of rabbits to snare and wood to chop. It was a lesson that I still remember today, something to do with keeping your head on your shoulders and not giving up and keeping it cool when wielding an axe. The actual repair job took about an hour or so of winding a lot of tough thread around the break and splicing wood into the shattered snowshoe frame to make it usable again. Soon, I was tramping around outside again testing the strength of the repair job.

Today, snowshoe-making is an art that is becoming quite popular, as the long, pointed snowshoe is a distinct mention of your bush knowledge and the rounded one is an indication that this woman is a serious bush lady. Nothing like a snowshoe to tell everyone which culture you come from.



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There goes **Disneyland**

by Xavier Kataquapit



How hard is it to be a chief of a First Nation? Well, it is not an easy trail. Anyone who decides to become the leader of his or her First Nation community or run for leadership positions nationally, provincially or regionally has to be highly skilled, well grounded and prepared to grow a very tough skin.

Most of those who come from remote First Nations, had to develop survival skills to live on the land while also learning to deal with the non-Native culture. This is no easy task because many of us have had on-again and off-again experiences in the education system in our communities or in cities and towns to the south. Many of us were born and raised with our language so that English was our second tongue. Life was often very difficult for us and we had to cope with alcoholism, addictions and racism. So, just to be able to deal with all of that and arrive at a point where we would want to step out into the limelight to lead a community or national or provincial political organization is more or less miraculous.

Many of my friends had so much to deal with and some of them left this world in their teens. Thirty years ago most of our remote First Nations were living in third-world conditions with no indoor plumbing, no clean and dependable water sources, little employment and poor education opportunities. Things have changed over the years but not enough to provide for healthy, prosperous and well-functioning communities. There is a housing crisis in remote First Nations, addictions and alcoholism are killing us, and health care is not sufficient nor widely available. Meanwhile, some employment has developed but we have fallen behind in terms of education and training.

We experience racism, our self-esteem is compromised, we turn to alcohol and drugs for immediate relief from it all and **there goes our dreams of living in Disneyland.**

You would think that part of the solution would be for people to simply leave these remote First Nations and live a better life elsewhere. However, most people just don't have the necessary skills to cope with that. They don't have a strong education background, they are compromised in mind, body and spirit because of generations of addictions, abuse and a colonial type of racism. Life in the outside world is not like it is shown on television sitcoms where everybody is living in wonderful homes, in friendly neighbourhoods and working at easy-to-get and high-paying jobs. Much of the time when we as remote First Nation people move to the south we are drowned in debt because we have not learned how to deal with the money system. We experience racism, our self-esteem is compromised, we turn to alcohol and drugs for immediate relief from it all and there goes our dreams of living in Disneyland.

So, how on earth do some of us actually make it to the point where we have enough strength, skills and self-esteem to become leaders? It is a long and hard road. When you see our First Nation leaders rise to talk at an event or deal with a group of national or provincial politicians and government bureaucrats or sit with academics and business people to figure something out, you should understand just how much work has gone into preparing for that day. I commend all of my people who manage to make it through all of

life's obstacles and instead of taking an easy trail they decide to step up and take on leadership roles. I know many of our northern Chiefs on a personal basis and I can tell you they are real survivors who constantly deal with life issues and their own histories to be able to find the strength, passion and determination to carry on. Too often people in their communities are banging them over the head and stabbing them in the back.

Much of the time these leaders are challenged, berated and undermined by the people they represent. Mind you, at times, some are deserving of harsh criticism but most of the time it is due to the anger, frustration and sadness that First Nation communities have to deal with. Sometimes we expect too much from our leaders and we want a few hundred years of neglect and dysfunction to be resolved in a short time. Perhaps from time to time when we are acting like wolf packs that turn on one of its own, we should remember that our children – the younger generation – are watching and learning our ways. It would be better for us to put the effort into electing the very best people we can from our communities to positions of leadership and give them the benefit of the doubt from time to time. Assist them when we can with a little support and help them to represent us as well as they can. Being a Chief is not easy and we should understand that.



Conseil Cri de la santé et des services sociaux de la Baie James

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Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay

JOB POSTINGS

Δ i Δ n j . Δ a u

Clinical Nurse Diabetes Educator

Description: Support and participate to the development and implementation of the Diabetes Education Program in a multidisciplinary setting. Collaborate in implementation and application of Canadian Diabetes Guidelines. Support local teams of health care providers.

Support the development of health care providers in their diabetes expertise by providing educational sessions and/or attending sessions with health care providers and their patients.

Assess the clinical and educational needs of the clients with pre-diabetes and diabetes. Develop and deliver instructions to meet those needs and counselling clients as needed to promote skill acquisition and problem solving abilities.

Bachelor of Science in Nursing or an undergraduate degree consisting of three (3) admissible certificates, of which two (2) are accredited certificates in Nursing. Licensed Diabetes Educator Certification by Canadian Diabetes Association (CDA).

Knowledge and understanding of diabetes and its management, including both the notional and pharmaceutical aspects of care. Knowledge of interactive teaching techniques for both individual and groups;

Work location: All communities

Community worker

Description: Person who participates in the identification of the needs of the population. She/He participates in the community organization & development and execute different action programs by using appropriate techniques, may act as a resources person for the groups.

Must have a CEGEP diploma with a core concentration in techniques of social work or a CEGEP certificate in social techniques or social counseling techniques;

Proper knowledge of the communities' social environment. Bilingual: Cree and English.

Work location: All communities

Physiotherapist

Description: Person who evaluates physical disabilities or incapacities that linked to neurological, musculoskeletal and cardio-respiratory systems. She/he determines a treatment plan and carries out interventions aimed to achieving optimal functional performance.

Bachelor or Master of Sciences in Physiotherapy. Membership to l'Ordre professionnel de la physiothérapie du Québec. Minimum 2 years' experience as a physiotherapist is an asset. Excellent knowledge of English, basic knowledge of French is mandatory and knowledge of the Cree language is an asset.

Work location: Eastmain, Nemaska, Whapmagoostui

PPRO (Strong and Healthy Children) / Public Health

Description: Person who is responsible for the maternal and child health community programs with a view to providing professional assistance for the development of services. She/he conducts research activities that are necessary for identifying and assessing needs and resources. She/he designs and proposes development plans and programs in order to ensure adequate social service planning. She/he provides advice concerning the implementation or improvement of programs and/or services. She/he may participate in various teaching or training activities.

Degree in social work or social sciences or an appropriate discipline. A minimum of three years (3) years of relevant experience in community development. Experience related to maternal and child health community programs would be an asset.

Work location: Mistissini

Speech Language Pathologist

Description: Person who evaluates speech, language and voice functions, as well as establishes and implements a treatment and intervention plan aimed at improving or restoring communication. She/he participates in clinical training.

Master's Degree in Speech Language Pathology. Member of the Ordre des orthophonistes et audiologistes du Québec (OOAQ). Two years of relevant experience. Able to speak, read and write English fluently;

Work location: Waskaganish, Mistissini

For more available positions, please visit
<http://www.creehealth.org/careers/job-postings>

To apply, send your **cover letter and CV in PDF format**, mentioning the posting number, to jobs.reg18@ssss.gouv.qc.ca.
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